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VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

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IT'S YOUR PAPER

Turnout Low for Valley Voters

BRAD TAYLOR
STAFF WRITER

Valley College students cast their votes last week for the Associated Student Union Executive Council and elected Mari Kiridjian as the president.

The elections were held April 17 and 18 in Monarch Square where 700 students cast their votes for new representatives. Only about 4 percent of Valley's estimated 17,000 students took the time and initiative to pick their student government.

During last Monday's candidate forum there were only about eight students in Monarch Square listening and asking questions of those running for office. The issue of student participation and awareness are key problems that the new president hopes to shine a light on by focusing on getting the word out on events well before they take place, and letting students know they have a voice in school's government.

"I actually feel like we need to publicize better," said Kiridjian. "Looking at the election, and looking at the number of students we have compared to the number who voted, it's

see 'ASU' page 4



IMA KURODA / VALLEY STAR
ASU President-elect Mari Kiridjian.

VALLEY THEATRE



HAIL TO THE CHIEF- Lorin Henner, who plays Caldwell B. Caldwell in the musical "Urinetown," takes a presidential stance during a song and dance routine. The play is being staged in the Horseshoe Theatre through May 5 at Los Angeles Valley College. For a review of "Urinetown," see pg. 5.

PAUL OLDEN/ VALLEY STAR

Vandalism Runs Amok

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
OPINION EDITOR

Vandalism and graffiti have always been the most rampant crimes at Valley College. They came to the attention of the school once again Thursday, April 12 when someone broke into a Democracy Matters display case, which housed pictures and information about the Iraq war, and damaged its contents.

The vandals also poured water all over the pictures of the Iraqis. The case — located in the Campus Center — was supposed to be locked, but in all of the commotion of the power outage Thursday, Student Services forgot to lock it.

"Someone wrote on the flag, the Iraqi flag we had in there and actually, we pulled it down later and looked at it closely, it really looked like they were trying

to spell my name, and then they wrote 'bitch' underneath," said Anitra Wetzel, president of Democracy Matters. "They wrote it in black and then they painted over it with dark blue paint and it could just be my imagination, but it hit me after staring at it for a few minutes."

This instance of vandalism is hardly an isolated event. In 2006, Valley had 21 reported incidents of vandalism and 73 cases of graffiti. This is enough of a problem, but it only becomes criminal when the damage is permanent.

"I don't see the point in vandalism," said nursing major Mario Pena. "Some people say it's an art, but I just think it's filthy. It's a filthy way of expressing your ideas and opinions just to claim your territory."

see 'Vandals' page 4

Lower Tuition Means Less Grant Funds

BY BRAD TAYLOR
STAFF WRITER

Valley College students may be surprised to learn that with the lowering of tuition comes the lowering of financial aid for those who need it most.

There is a provision in the Pell Grant program that limits the amount of money a student may receive based on tuition cost, so a student at CSUN could be awarded more funds based on tuition cost even though the cost of living of a Valley student is essentially the same.

The "tuition sensitivity" provision is felt most in California where com-

munity college tuition is much lower than the rest of the country. The incorrect assumption that tuition is the largest financial obstacle for attending college is being addressed by our legislatures in the House of Representatives and Senate.

"This 'tuition sensitivity' provision unfairly penalizes students — including thousands in California — who attend lower tuition colleges," said U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer in a press release.

Boxer and U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein have introduced legislation to eliminate the "tuition sensitivity" provision. The

Pell Grant Equity Act of 2007 was passed by the House of Representatives and will now be introduced in the U.S. Senate.

The Act would benefit nearly 96,000 students in the 2007-2008 school year. The Pell Grant could increase an average of \$108 per student and offer immediate assis-

stance.

"This bill would eliminate this provision and ensure our nation's students are not penalized for receiving an education they can afford at a community college," said Feinstein.

Valley has introduced its own resolution to help give a voice to the stu-

dents.

"Students can go to the ASU office and sign the resolution," said Vice Chair of the Lobby Committee Jose Fuentes.

When asked what else students could do, Fuentes urged everyone to let their local representatives know how they feel and that every let-

ter and phone call does count.

"People don't think writing or calling their Congressman or Senator makes a difference, but it does," said Fuentes.

For more information on the Pell Grant Equity Act, visit the ASU office to view or sign the Valley resolution.

VALLEY PEOPLE

Jones Sets the Pace at EOPS

BY JOSH SPENCE
STAFF WRITER

Sitting behind his L-shape desk with the lights dimmed and jazz music playing softly in the background, the new Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) director works calmly but quickly. The ambience of the office conveys subtlety and calm, but it also underscores the intensity and passion Dr. Walter Jones has for his profession.

"My door is always open," Jones said. "I am more than willing to roll up my sleeves and work to help improve this campus."

Jones was named Dean of Student Services EOPS/CARE (Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education) March 22 after serving as EOPS assistant dean since September 2006. Previously, Jones served as the program's director at Cal State Dominguez Hills (CSDH) for five years.

As the new head, Jones is determined to make the program stand out.

"I want students to think of EOPS [as] more than just another resource program on campus," Jones said. "The great thing about EOPS is

that so many students qualify, they just don't know about the program. It really levels the playing field [for students financially]."

EOPS and CARE are state funded programs that were created in the late '60s with the intent on helping lower income college students who struggle academically, offering free services to help those students eventually excel.

Describing himself as a "journeyman" educator, Jones has served as a faculty member, a counselor, a program developer and an administrator at CSDH as well as Valley College in his 16-year career. He has presented research at the Council for Opportunity in Education's Annual



PAUL OLDEN/ VALLEY STAR

READY FOR ALL - Walter Jones is now at the helm of EOPS at Valley College and hopes to add more students to its rosters, making sure those in need get the services they deserve.

see 'Jones' page 4

Forum Airs Veteran Views

BY KHARA HUBERMAN
COPY EDITOR

Cavalry Scout Edgar Cuevas refused to degrade an 18-year-old Iraqi in front of his family, taking care to comfort the youth instead. His compassion earned him the title "dirt-bag" from his military peers.

These were the type of stories told at the "Let's Talk about Iraq" forum on April 17 in Monarch Hall, sponsored by Democracy Matters. The club put on the event in hopes of educating students about the realities of war while creating a supportive place

for veterans to speak their views on governmental policies as part of a week-long commemoration for soldiers killed in action.

"We are the new Romans," said Chicano Studies Professor Pete Lopez, alluding to the fact that the United States is occupying land that does not belong to them.

The one-sided event started late and opened with a 10-minute documentary trailer "Arlington West," which displays "temporary cemeteries" in various locations, which honor more than 2,500 unacknowledged fallen U.S. soldiers.

"We [are] just supporting a government that is really run by the political and economic leaders who care very little about the rest of us when they send us off to a war," said Lopez, who is against bloodshed and expressed his feelings that innocent Iraqis and soldiers are being killed in a conflict with no purpose. "We have been in Iraq longer than we fought in World War II ... [and] we are halfway through the time we spent in Vietnam." He further explained that, "war in itself is a bankrupt policy [because] wars are

see 'Forum' page 4

Valley Students Lend a Helping Hand

By DIANA QUEZADA
STAFF WRITER

Seventeen Valley College students traveled to New Orleans over spring break to help the disabled and elderly rebuild their homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina as part of the Hurricane Katrina Commemoration and Rebuilding project.

Organized by professor Tara Lake with Habitat for Humanity, the students spent six days at the hostel Camp Hope, learning about New Orleans and what it means to truly give back.

"I think it was an awesome experience," said Valley stu-

dent Karen Linares. "When I think of New Orleans, in the end, there's still so much to get done. The experience alone with Habitat has really just changed my perspective on everything and I know that I want to come back in the summer."

Not only did they help rebuild homes, but students went on learning excursions, which included a bus tour of the city that focused on areas that were most affected by the wrath of Katrina.

"The best day was yesterday when I got to see my house and that it's progressed," said Valley student Eboni Hayes. "And that just made me smile from

within."

Students were chosen through a screening process that required an application along with a 500-word essay, a letter of recommendation, and a \$10 application fee. The selected students were "sincere in their interest in really making a difference in the lives of others," according to Lake.

Fundraisers garnered approximately \$16,000 and included a Valentine's Day teddy-bear sale, Mardi Gras and African Marketplace events held by the Black Student Union, and a raffle that gave away prizes like an iPod Nano and a befitting Cajun dinner.

One of the days while helping at a construction site, Linares said a gentleman in his 60s or 70s walked by and asked, "Oh, do y'all do this for free? Because I have a lot of work that needs to be done to my home."

This man's supplies had been stolen, and he said that he had been getting the runaround trying to get the necessary tools to rebuild his home. Lake walked with him to his duplex and found fire and water damage and one building that had completely burned down.

"We were going to take out as much debris from the burned down building as we

possibly could," said Linares. "We just got as far as the front door because ... there were loose boards everywhere. The ceiling boards had fallen in ... and all of them were nailed together with other things that if you move one ... the things on top ... would fall on top of you, so you really couldn't do much and of course, they need professionals to take all that out."

After a week of physical work, Linares realized that there was still much to be done. "It's still a work in progress," she said. "I'm just hoping everyone else enjoyed it as well as much as I did."

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Reddock Appointed as New LACCD Trustee



Angela J. Reddock

By JOSH SPENCE
STAFF WRITER

Angela Reddock will become the newest trustee for the Los Angeles Community College District when she is sworn in today at Southwest College.

The Board of Trustees ap-

pointed Reddock to the post earlier this month to fill the seat vacated by Michael Waxman, who resigned from elected office in February.

The LACCD is a political subdivision of the State of California and serves as the governing body for the nine Los Angeles community colleges.

"I am very excited," said Reddock in a press release after her appointment. "I am joining the board at a very exciting time for the district. The board recently approved a five-year strategic plan that focuses on very critical issues for the district: improving community access, creating community partnerships, and raising the standards of education for our

students."

Reddock further stated in the release, "I believe community college can be the glue which connects multiple issues within our city and county, the betterment of the economy; the creation of sustainable jobs and career opportunities in addition to the linking of our communities across ethnic and cultural lines."

Reddock, 39, received her Juris Doctorate from UCLA and earned her undergraduate degree from Amherst College. She is a partner in the law firm of Carroll, Burdick & McDonough, LLP.

Reddock currently holds positions as the LA County Government Services Commission

and is the chair of the board of directors for the LA African American Women's Public Policy Institute in addition to running for District 11 office of the LA City council in '04-'05.

"She was chosen for her experience and leadership in her professional and civic involvements," said LACCD Board President Georgia Mercer.

Applicants for the position were asked to respond to a questionnaire, submit a resume and curriculum with supportive and relevant materials. Twenty-seven candidates presented speaking points during the regular public session of the bi-monthly LACC board meeting held at the district's downtown office.

"We were extremely impressed with all of the applicants and we hope they will all stay involved with the LACCD," said Mercer. "We are looking forward to working with Ms. Reddock for the next two challenging years while we select a new chancellor for the district, open newly constructed buildings

at our nine colleges and receive campus make-overs."

Reddock's term will expire June 30, 2009.

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Security Does Not Equal Safety

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
OPINION EDITOR

Because of the recent shooting at Virginia Tech University, Valley College students wonder if they are safe attending school. Campuses can and should be safer but that doesn't mean students can afford to wait until they are.

"We should have more security," said art major Josh Sanoff. "We should figure out better ways to deal with people who obviously do have some problems. I mean everyone knew [that Seung-Hui Cho] had social and mental issues and there was nowhere to go to say this guy needs help . . . I think there should be a system dealing with people who need help in that way."

At 7:15 a.m. Monday April 16, the Virginia Tech Police received a 911 call about two murders on campus. Classes started at 8 a.m. and the college did not issue an announcement until 9:26 a.m. when many of the 26,000 students were already in class. By 10 a.m. Cho, had already continued his rampage, killing 30 others and then himself.

The massacre at Virginia Tech is the most recent in a chain of more than 100 Americans shooting multiple people. According to Yahoo News, they have become more common since Charles Whitman opened fire from a tower at the University of Texas in 1966. Unfortunately, school shootings have become a part of our culture, and this one is affecting people more because it's one of the worst in U.S. history.

Valley is a very safe campus with constant security and only six attempted violent crimes in 2006. This year there has only been one reported incident of battery. By far, most of the crimes at Valley are property crimes, according to Deputy Sheriff Tom Lynch.

"We have a contingency for everything," said Lynch. "We train constantly for as many scenarios as we can come up [with]. All [Virginia Tech] does is reinforce the reasons why we train these guys."

There are things that every college could do to be safer, such as having an emergency e-mail and intercom warning system already set up, but students shouldn't stop coming to school because a shooting might happen.

Valley has been planning to upgrade security by adding lights, parking lot call boxes, and security cameras. None of these features can really stop a person so intent upon hurting people that they are willing to kill him or herself, but they would help to prevent the problem in the first place by showing that Valley is a security-conscious campus and possibly prevent many lesser crimes.

A college can only become so secure before it starts to feel less like a school and more like a prison. Fences, bars and metal detectors are not the answer. Valley needs to have a more cohesive plan and everyone on campus should be involved so that we know what to do in case of a true emergency.

During the blackout on April 12, there was no plan about what people on campus should do and it seemed like nobody knew what happened or why.

Schools have been the targets of this kind of violence, but there are no guarantees that someone with severe mental problems will not attack a supermarket or a mall. People are not any safer in other public places. Schools need to have adequate security and other public places have that same responsibility.

That does not mean that people should barricade themselves inside their homes. People shouldn't live their lives in fear of a shooting that will probably never happen.

Unfortunately school shootings have become a reality, and for the rest of the population, including college students, life must go on. The best thing that students and colleges alike can do is to have a plan of action if these situations happen.

Local Action Reflects National Attitude

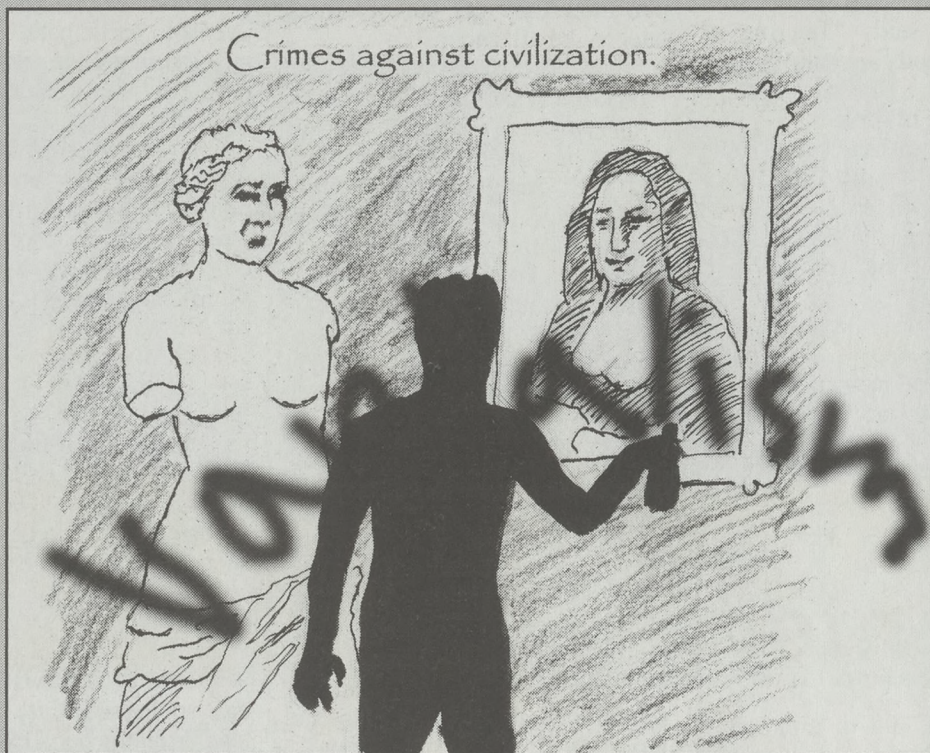


ILLUSTRATION BY RICARDO BARRERA / VALLEY STAR

■ An act of vandalism at Valley College is a symptom of the disrespect that has invaded political debate.

BY KRISTEN BECKER
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Because no one is willing to listen, the debate over an issue as important as the Iraq War has become no more than a shouting match between

the two sides. This attitude has spread from politicians to infect the rest of the American public, including Valley College students.

A tribute set up by Valley club Democracy Matters, to the victims of the Iraq War, both American and Iraqi, was vandalized at Valley College between the afternoon of April 12 and the morning of April 14.

According to Anitra Wetzel, the

club's president that created the tribute, "Someone came in and poured water on just the pictures of the Iraqis . . . [leaving] the American pictures alone."

The vandals also took an Iraqi flag from the display and "it really looked like they were trying to spell my name and then they wrote bitch underneath," Wetzel said.

This incident was not a simple act of vandalism — it was an attempt to deny the club members' right to express themselves simply because the perpetrators presumably didn't agree with the display's message.

The purpose of the display was to remind passersby of the cost of war. This is not necessarily a pro or antiwar statement. It was simply a sign of respect for those who have been affected by the fighting. Unfortunately, the people who decided to damage it could not see this.

This kind of disrespect and name-calling is not limited to college students. It mirrors a growing trend in American politics. Rather than debate the issues at hand, both sides resort to personal attacks that do nothing but lower the level of political debate in this country.

The most popular form of this political sensationalism today is the tendency of proponents of the Iraq War to question the patriotism and dedication of anyone who does not

fully support it.

Vice President Dick Cheney is notorious for his brutal verbal attacks on anyone who disagrees with him.

In a speech to the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, Cheney said, "When members of Congress pursue an antiwar strategy that's been called 'slow bleeding,' they are not supporting the troops, they are undermining them."

The second most powerful man in the country abused his platform simply to score cheap political points. The war is far more complicated than talking points will allow it to be, and the vice president and all other politicians do the American public a disservice when they try to break it down into sound bites.

Although voters expect elected officials, particularly at the national level to engage opposing view points in the interest of the greater public good, politicians in Washington are no better than immature college students who refuse to let others speak out.

LETTERS

Send letters to the editor to thevalleystar@yahoo.com -- Letters must be signed, should be no longer than 300 words, and include a subject line of "Letters to the Editor" and are subject to editing.

Ruckus Redirected to Religion

■ Too many people mistakenly blame religion for the world's problems.

BY ANDY FEHER
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

In the last two years, blaming religion for the world's ills has become vogue. A fusillade of books — most notably, "The God Delusion" by Richard Dawkins and "The End of Faith" by Sam Harris — document the allegedly destructive effects of religion. Their popularity is evidenced by months on the New York Times Bestseller List.

Even with the avalanche of criticism — some of it warranted — there are better reasons to explain conflicts around the globe.

Take the apparent civil war in Iraq, for example. The Sunni-Shia rift, dating back nearly 1,400 years over the succession of the prophet Muhammad, speciously bares the brunt of the blame for warfare.

The real culprit of the bloodshed is power. In international relations, power becomes a zero-sum game. Simply put, as Sunnis lose power, Shias gain. Saddam Hussein defended the minority Sunnis against Shia rebellions. Once Hussein was toppled, Sunnis lost power and have been fighting to reclaim it ever since.

Merely labeling Iraq a religiously motivated civil war evades complex internal divisions. There are multiple wars going on inside the Mahdi Army, a Shia militia.

According to US military and intelligence officials, 23 militias inhabit Iraq, and most are fighting for mutually exclusive objectives.

Another clash in the Middle East falsely attributed to religion is the Israeli-Palestinian issue. It's not about Jews against Muslims, but a problem of real estate.

After the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel annexed Sinai, the Golan Heights and Gaza. Israel has returned large portions of land, but the Palestinian unity government of Hamas and Fatah remains stubborn. Hamas refuses to acknowledge Israel's right to exist or renounce violence until Israel returns to the pre-1967 borders.

To make matters worse, Fatah's leader, Mahmoud Abbas, downplayed the Holocaust in his dissertation, and he's considered the voice of moderation responsible for reconciliation.

A constant power struggle makes the Hamas-Fatah coalition weak. Since Hamas ended Fatah's 40-year hold on power in January 2006, violence between the two parties has continued unabated. In March, Hamas supporters fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the home of a Fatah senior commander, wounding seven and killing one.

In Europe, Muslims are blamed for just about everything. Slums and riots are

pullulating not because of a religious division. Professor William McNeill of the University of Chicago believes that the real reason is that, "European cities limit the possibility for children from different ethnic backgrounds to assimilate their behavior to a common norm."

As a result, superficial judgments such as differences in appearance inhibit economic and social equality. Religion plays a little role, if any.

Religion unquestionably deserves blame for awful events in history like the Crusades, but the 20th century witnessed the harmful consequences of many non-religious ideologies: fascism, communism, Nazism and Maoism that caused widespread death and despair.

Karl Marx, the founder of communism, might have been right when, in his "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," he said, "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness."

For now, however, religion has proven resilient. So before authors and commentators from Harris to HBO's Bill Maher offer their repines, without coming to a broad understanding of a regional dispute, large segments of the population will endure a profoundly misguided understanding of the world.

Merely labeling Iraq a religiously motivated civil war evades complex internal divisions.

USC's Reaction to Protests too Extreme

BY JOSHUA SPENCE
STAFF WRITER

For any person, especially a college student, it is difficult at best to choose between what is right and their promising future. Thirteen University of Southern California (USC) students had to make this decision when they were threatened with suspension if they continued their sit-in urging the university to ensure their apparel is not sweatshop produced.

Protesting is a part of the college experience as much as the late night frat parties and the early morning exams that follow them. With political disenfranchisement as high as it is among the college demographic, political activism should be accepted if not welcomed and certainly not stifled.

Michael L. Jackson, USC Vice President for Student Affairs, issued a statement saying "Universities are open places and we provide lots of opportunity to protest, to make their concerns known." Whether he was referencing USC is debatable. Though they have not been charged, Jackson also mentioned that the demonstrators went from acceptable protest to illegal disruption, citing that the university "needed to make the best decision for USC, given the circumstances." Was that before or after the students got pillows for their sit in?

Six years ago Harvard University students took over an administration building for 21 days demanding a living wage for campus employees with minimal reprimands. Hunger strikers seeking an expanded Chicano Studies

program camped out at UCLA for two weeks in 1993 without penalties or arrests.

The issue of suppressing students' First Amendment rights to protest on campus a huge issue.

Giving the protesting students 15 minutes to decide if they wanted a semester-long suspension with fail grades, non-refundable tuition fees and dormitory evictions seems like the appropriate response.

Adding insult to injury, USC also decided to notify the students' parents of the ongoing protest. To be fair, this was decided only after sending the students to bed without dinner was no longer an option.

USC's action could be seen more as an act of emotional manipulation than benevolence.

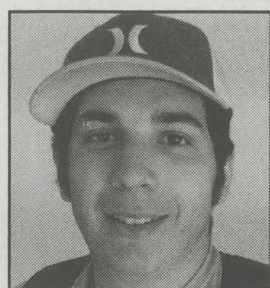
Though USC issued a vague statement regarding their apparel, it has been overshadowed by their reaction to the protest.

USC apparel is selling at an all-time high with their basketball, baseball and football programs being simultaneously and enormously successful. Combined with USC's lack of a statement concerning sweatshops and their reaction to the student protest further highlights the difference between USC the university and USC the corporation.

USC is known for its excellent journalism, film and athletic programs. For such a prestigious university as USC, one that is synonymous with academia, it should not also become synonymous with student suppression and sweatshops.

Campus View

PHOTOS BY VALERIA PODOYNYTSYNA
TEXT BY JESSICA SHAFFER



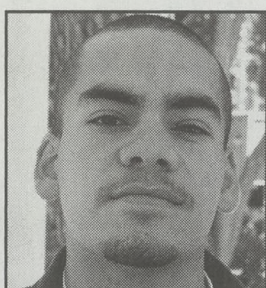
"I think it makes a place that you have to be all the time . . . much more unattractive. It's not pleasing to the eye."

-Michael Brogin
Political Science



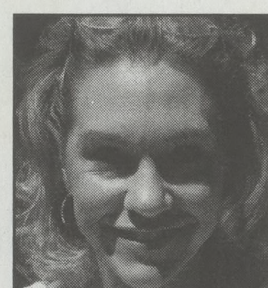
"It's very degrading to our school . . . It's disrespectful . . . It doesn't look like a learning environment anymore."

-Cherrie Rosales
Nursing



"I don't know. I guess it's not good but I haven't really seen any [on campus]."

-Hugo Reyes
Astronomy



"I think it's disgusting. The campus is here for the benefit of the student and . . . as a student I want to come to an environment that I find appealing. . . . If it's destroyed, then what good is it?"

-Dawn Drake
Broadcasting

What do you think about vandalism on campus?

'Jones'

continued from page 1

Conference, the Conference on the Retention of Latino Students in Higher Education, and the Los Angeles County of Education, in addition to chairing WASC accreditation committees. Jones currently holds a seat on the Diversity Committee at Valley, a steering committee for college president Tyree Wieder.

The father of two earned his master's degree in English at Cal State Northridge with the intent of becoming a college level teacher. After a counseling stint with the Urban League, he decided to make an impact outside the scope

of a classroom. By focusing on the administration aspect of higher education, Jones wanted to make policy that universally impacts students.

He has since earned a master's degree in Education from Cal State Dominguez Hills and obtained his doctorate in Educational Leadership from UCLA.

Being the EOPS director gives Jones the opportunity to impact the students who walk through his doors daily, and he would eventually like to influence an even larger constituency.

"Of course, being the president of a college would be the penultimate accomplishment in my career."

'Vandals'

continued from page 1

Vice President of Administrative Services Tom Jacobsmeyer said, "Tagging is where somebody's writing in a gang symbol. That's our most prevalent type of graffiti."

According to Jacobsmeyer, the college spends \$40-45,000 per year removing graffiti. Graffiti is the most persistent problem on campus, occurring primarily in bathrooms.

"Probably the biggest problem is the Campus Center bathrooms, the brand new ones that we just finished," said Jacobsmeyer.

"They've scored the mirrors in there over and over and over again. They've scored the tile ... and we believe it's mostly the high school students because it seems to happen after they get out of school later in the afternoon."

One of the main problems with protecting Valley is that it is an open campus. Without fences or restrictions upon who may enter and with being located so close to Ulysses S. Grant High School, young students may enter the college without notice.

Though the college is mostly on the defense when it comes to graffiti and vandalism, Valley does prosecute offenders when they catch them.

"I'd love to have an officer on every square inch of this campus, but that's just not going to happen ... so we need the assistance of the public," said Deputy Sheriff Tom Lynch. "The public ... if they're truly concerned about their community, and the college is their community if they're attending school here, should be vigilant and reporting all crimes on campus."

'ASU'

continued from page 1

ridiculous. I feel like a lot of the students don't know about the events to participate."

One candidate seemed pleased with the election considering a limited time frame.

"I was excited because we were up like 300 votes," said economics major and treasurer candidate Noel Hollowell. "And we only had four days to campaign so I think we reached a lot of people, I just wish we had more time."

The Executive Council officers are in charge of representing the students concerns and giving them a voice by actively taking part in the college's shared governing body. Those officers participate on college committees such as budgets, college council, curriculum, instructional programs, matriculation, student services, and technology.

Some of the events the ASU has sponsored this school year have been the book exchange pro-

gram, the petition to lower text book prices, the fine arts festival and the student trip to help housing projects in New Orleans over spring break.

"It is bad that a lot of students don't even know who the ASU are," said Kiridjian. "We are your student government, and a lot of students have great ideas, but they just don't know where to go, and I just really want us to be out there letting them know what we are all about."

New officers include; President Mari Kiridjian; Vice President Jamocoe Black; Treasurer Hayk Galstyan; Athletics Commissioner Diana P. Jimenez; Public Relations Commissioner Jorge L. Resendez; and Commissioner of Student and Social Affairs Armen Melikyan.

A referendum to raise the ASU per semester fee from \$7 to \$10 failed with 66% of voters opting to keep the amount as it is.

The Executive ASU holds weekly meetings Tuesday at 12:45 p.m. in Campus Center 104 and is open to all Valley students.

'Forum'

continued from page 1

profit driven." "While we prance around wired to our iPods or cell phones," said Silvia Jimenez, ASU's evening division event coordinator. "We forget those who sacrifice their lives for our 'way of life.'"

Steve Fine of Neighbors for Peace and Justice presented a timeline leading up to the Iraq conflict, saying, "The war is a propaganda sales campaign to convince the American people to support a war of aggression against a country that did not have any WMD program, connections to 9/11, or the ability to attack its neighbors."

Members of "Iraq Veterans against the War" David Merrell and Cuevas spoke about their first-hand experiences.

Cuevas served in Iraq February 2004 to March 2005, when 12 days from seeing his family, was involuntarily extended for another year and a half. "They don't want to help us out because there are so many of us coming back with issues and problems," he said about his difficulty in obtaining counseling for his Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. "No one gets out of this war clean and we're all hurt in some way."

"What we're doing over there is a position of dominance where we basically scare Iraqi's into trying to do what we want," said Merrell, a national guard who was in Iraq from 2005-2006. "I went over there with the assumption I could help people make a better civilization and home and I learned very early that what were doing over there is not helping Iraqi people, [but] actually hurting them ... that's when I decided when I came home, I would speak out against this war."

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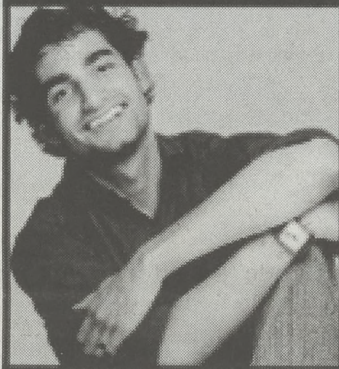
Mail-in, in-person and online registration begin April 23. In-person registration is available at the Client Services counter, Room 100, in the Tseng College/Matador Bookstore Complex. Summer 2007 for Visiting Summer Students information is available on the web. Class schedules are available at the Tseng College/Bookstore Complex. For additional information or a free Summer 2007 schedule, please call the Tseng College office, (818) 677-2504 or visit web site: <http://tsengcollege.csun.edu>.

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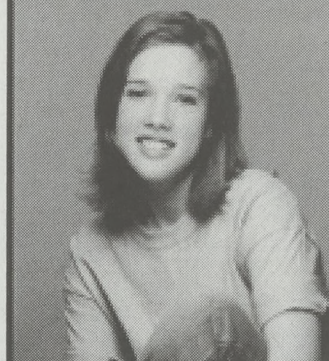
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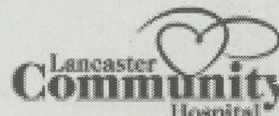
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WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, April 25

**Administration of Justice
Club Meeting @**
Foreign Language
Room 102; 2:30
p.m.

Thursday, April 26

M.E.Ch.A Meeting @
Foreign Language
Room 111; 2:30
p.m.

**Run-on Sentences
Workshop @**
Writing Center,
Humanities 100; 3
- 4 p.m.

Friday, April 27

**Gershwin's Rhapsody in
Blue @ Music**
Recital Hall 106;
11:30 a.m.; FREE

**Urinetown @ Horseshoe
Theatre; and**
Saturday, April 28;
8 p.m.; Tickets
are \$15 general
admission, \$10 students and
seniors; Reservations may
be made by calling 818-947-
2790.

Fred Benedetti on Guitar
@ Music Recital
Hall 106; 8:00
p.m.

Think Transfer!

Wednesday, April 25

UC Irvine Rep
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

How to Transfer Workshop 1
p.m. - 2 p.m.

Thursday, April 26

Antioch Rep.
10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Monarch
Square

Undecided Major/Career
Workshop
1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Friday, April 27

UC Santa Cruz Rep.
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

UCLA Stomp Transfer Student
Conference
8 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Bus Trip)

Monday, April 30

CSU Los Angeles Rep.
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
How to Transfer Workshop
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 2

CSU Los Angeles Rep
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

All events held in Career/
Transfer Center (Adm.126)
unless otherwise indicated.
For further information
contact the Career/Transfer
Center at (818) 947-2646.

Top 5 Online Stories

1. President Putting Soldiers in
Danger
2. Imus' Words Out of Line
3. New Orleans After Katrina
4. Quentin Tarantino's Top Five
Grindhouse Films
5. Nine Inch Nails Introduces
Fans to "Year Zero"

To read these and more
stories, visit the Valley
Star online at www.laval-leystar.com

FIRST PERSON ACCOUNT, SECOND OF THREE PARTS

Reliving the Horrors of Katrina



GHOST TOWN - A home in New Orleans' Uptown district still bears a memorial to one of Hurricane Katrina's many victims.

BY KRISTEN BECKER
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

It seems like the mainstream media have long forgotten New Orleans and the ongoing struggle of its residents to rebuild. Sandy Smith, a New Orleans tour guide, makes sure that visitors know exactly what happened to her beloved city during and after Hurricane Katrina.

When she showed our group of students and faculty from Valley College Hurricane Katrina's damage, she did not mince words when placing the blame for the extent of the tragedy. She warned us as we neared the hardest hit areas, "You'll find that I'm not kind to FEMA and the core of engineers here."

As she showed us what Katrina and the resulting floods did physically to the city, Smith, through her own story, also reminded us of the human tragedy that took place at the same time.

"There was no light

whatsoever in the city [after the storm]. You could hear gunshots going off, people screaming and crying," she said. "Helicopters everywhere, you could hear them up in the sky, but you didn't know what was going on, where the water was."

Our tour took us from the crowded French Quarter where the storm's damage has long been repaired into what she warned us were "awful sections in the city" where entire communities had been wiped away.

Although she did evacuate to a hotel, which she described as "vertical evacuation," Smith stayed in the city during the hurricane and rode the storm out in the hotel's ballroom.

She was one of the tens of thousands of Gulf Coast residents who lost their homes - the winds "ripped the roof off and collapsed one of the side walls" of the house she rented in the French Quarter.

Once the storm passed, Smith was safe, but com-

pletely unaware of what was really happening in the city.

"I found out my city was flooding Tuesday afternoon [the hurricane made landfall Monday, Aug. 29, 2005] at one o'clock when I physically saw water on Wall Street, she explained. "The reason was because we lost all communication with the outside world... We didn't know that those [flood] walls had broken down and that those other canals... we did not know that any of that had broken down. So, those people were literally sitting on top of their roof for a day and a night before I found out that anything had happened there."

Although I could not imagine how the survivors coped in the days after the storm, Smith's story gave me a strong idea.

"By Wednesday [two days after the storm made landfall], the water was definitely rising up. The stench in the city was awful. There

was no food and water and people were heading towards the Convention Center at that point."

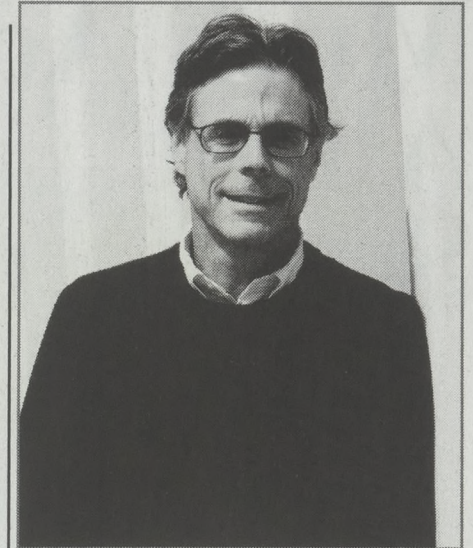
Approximately 20,000 people sought refuge from the rising flood waters at the New Orleans Convention Center alone. An additional 26,000 were staying in the Louisiana Superdome.

Trapped in the city with no supplies and no home, Sandy Smith had to survive for four days before the army finally flew supplies into the city the Friday after the storm. Unfortunately, they were so afraid of the desperate residents rushing the helicopter that they decided to drop the food and water from the sky. On impact, many of the water bottles burst open.

Despite the stories we heard on the news of rampant crime and looting after the storm, Smith highlighted the humanity of those she was trapped with.

"People thought we were going to act like animals. We didn't act like animals," she said. "When we got the water and food, we gave it to the elderly first and the young children. I saw people take water, they hadn't had any water. They'd take one sip of water and literally go bathe faces with water, trying to revive people, especially young children."

Although some of her fellow New Orleanians refused to come back after Katrina, Sandy Smith plans on staying in the city and helping to rebuild despite her experiences after the storm. "We are deeply rooted in our communities here and our whole history's here," Smith said. "I'm fourth generation here and I can't even imagine living anywhere else, I really can't."



PAUL OLDEN/ VALLEY STAR

English professor Robert Metzger shares his favorite novels.

Metzger's Top Five Novels

BY ANDY FEHER
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Among the literati in Valley College's English Department, Professor Robert Metzger stands out for his jovial personality and the erudite way he discusses his subject. In his torrents of eloquence it's not unlikely to hear the maxims of Aristotle. This semester, he teaches a Shakespeare course and English Fundamentals.

Sympathetic to those who may not have savored every waking moment of English 102, Metzger proffered novels accessible to anyone, not just English majors. Truly memorable books - those we laud through the ages - "tell the truth about the human experience, capturing strangeness, mystery and beauty," Metzger said.

The classics have a "high standard of truthfulness, moral complexity and a coherent vision of the human experience," said Metzger. "They have a special feeling for how the world actually works and the ability to represent the ways fate operates in human life through plot and narrative structures, which heightens one's involvement and pleasure."

The authors of such works convey their messages with "a voice that is singular and recognizable in distinctiveness, just like a Picasso." Great novelists have a keen sense of human behavior, and as a result, they are able to leave their readers "in an exquisite sense of surprise."

Metzger gained his greatest reading experiences from the following books:

1. **"The Red and the Black"** by Stendhal. This 19th century French work offers the unforgettable character of Julien Sorel who "continually amazes."

2. **"Anna Karenina"** by Leo Tolstoy. Perhaps now that "Anna Karenina" has been added to Oprah Winfrey's esteemed book club, more people will get their hands on this 19th century tour de force.

3. **"Crime and Punishment"** by Fyodor Dostoevsky. This is admittedly a tough work to dive into, but a booklover will reap the benefits of the investment.

4. **"Moby Dick"** by Herman Melville. Metzger needed but one word to describe Melville's first-person narrative: "stupendous."

5. **"Sister Carrie"** by Theodore Dreiser. In Dreiser's first novel, he evinces an authoritative insight into human longing, which remains unparalleled. "[H]is penetration into the human spirit exceeds that of F. Scott Fitzgerald."

THEATER REVIEW

"Urinetown" Makes a Big Splash

BY JOSH SPENCE
STAFF WRITER

Rarely do you find a musical that proclaims too much exposition will inherently kill it. It's even rarer to find a musical that will admit it has a horrible name. While "Urinetown" may not be the most becoming title, the upbeat musical numbers, inspired performances, and fourth dimensional humor (involving the audience as part of the story) make "Urinetown" worth its weight in water.

The narrator, Officer Lockstock (played by Addison Randall) introduces the audience to Urinetown. The city is so overcome with drought that private bathrooms are eliminated and replaced by public toll amenities in an effort to conserve water and effectively line the villain's pockets with cash.

Randall may not have as powerful a singing voice as some of the other cast members, but narrates the story with panache and delivers jokes with vaudevillian flair that is equally funny and disarming.

Lorin Henner plays Caldwell B. Cladwell, the villain who is always looking to raise prices. Bobby Strong (enthusiastically played by



PAUL OLDEN/ VALLEY STAR

URINETOWN - The cast of "Urinetown" brings the musical to a close with its rendition of "I See a River." The Valley College Theatre Department is staging the Tony Award winning play at the Horseshoe Theatre through May 5.

Michael Thatcher) is the musical's hero who leads the revolution against Cladwell based on the ethos that it's not a privilege to pee, it's a right.

At the center of the "Les Miserables" revolutionist fervor and post-apocalyptic conservatism is the Montague and Capulet love story between Bobby Strong and Cladwell's daughter Hope.

Carly Turner is easily the star of the musical as Hope. She has the right amount of naivety that makes her endearing to the audience.

Additional standout per-

formers are Heather Williams, who adds much needed comic relief as Little Sally; Aaron J. Bronsal plays Senator Fipp who is an effective foil for Cladwell and Marjorie Vander Hoff as Penelope Pennywise. Vander Hoff's Mae West demeanor on stage and powerful voice allows her to steal some of "Urinetown's" best scenes.

The play not only takes pride in being dirty, passionate and ribald, it revels in it. The characters are aware of their impending doom but they trudge forward regard-

less of the consequences.

People may be turned off by "Urinetown" on the name alone, but look past the title and you'll find a story that is thought-provoking and delivers subtle social commentary.

While the ending may be tragic, the songs are upbeat and the performances are precise and energetic.

"Urinetown" is playing at the Horseshoe Theatre April 27, 28 and May 4 and 5 at Valley College. Tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for students.

Much Ado About Something

BY BRAD TAYLOR
STAFF WRITER

Monarch Square became an outdoor theater Tuesday as Valley College hosted its first "Shakespeare Birthday Festival."

The blue sky and great weather helped kick off what is hoped to be an annual event celebrating the world-famous writer and his legacy.

"So many of our everyday expressions we see in the media and the papers are based on Shakespeare's plays," said the event founder and Valley Professor Ida Ghaffari. "We are celebrating his 433rd birthday."

William Shakespeare (Eric Stein) himself was the Master of Ceremonies and held court over the National American Shakespeare Company at the Knightsbridge Theater, which performed scenes from some of Shakespeare's most famous works.

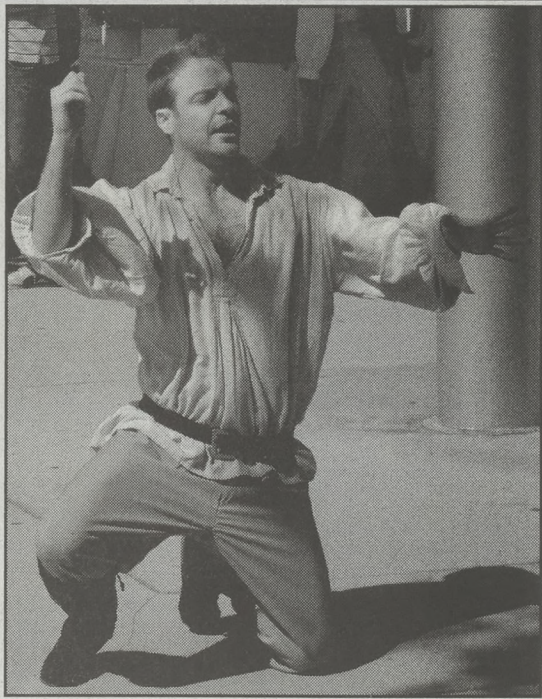
Students from 15

schools sat on the steps of Monarch Square and watched performances from Valley's own singing group, the Madrigals. The crowd was also entertained by jugglers, renaissance dancers and some swashbuckling sword fights.

The event was catered and featured food with a very medieval English flavor - turkey legs, bangers (sausage) and steak on a stick had folks lined up in the sun waiting to try something new. Queen Elizabeth I (Andrea Willoughby) was also on hand to present the birthday cake and oversee the festivities.

"We are having a great day," said former "Blossom" star and current UCLA student Mayim Bialik "I am a student at UCLA, so it's nice to come to another college and see some good theater...and have some cake."

The outdoor fair was of course pre-



RICARDO BARRERA/ VALLEY STAR
ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE - Geoffrey Hilback, of the National American Shakespeare Company plays Mercutio from "Romeo and Juliet"

sented in three acts as is befitting any celebration paying tribute to the master of the stage. The audience seemed entertained by the very capable acting troupe that went through scenes from such Shakespeare classics as "Hamlet," "Macbeth" and "Much Ado About Nothing."

"This is great and beautiful," said civil engineer major Joe Sanchez. "I have never been to something like and I hope they have it again."

Shakespeare's party was sponsored by the Miller Automotive Group and there were

some booths featuring T-shirts and buttons adorned with Shakespeare's famous mug.

Chairman of the English Department Alfred Zucker and Ghaffari made the opening remarks. The fair also saw appearances by Valley President Tyree Wieder and many other professors.

A fair by any other name would not be as sweet as this fun loving tribute to the man who continues to challenge us with lots of homework and gives many a Hollywood screenwriter inspiration.

Speech Team Talks Way to Top

BY WILL REYES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Valley College Forensics team continued in its success this semester, placing second in the nation at the 2007 Phi Rho Pi national forensics tournament.

The tournament, held in Houston April 9-15, featured 78 schools with more than 500 college students competing in a variety of public speaking, debate and other events.

Valley took 10 students from their speech and debate team and won 12 individual awards, bringing home four gold medals, two silvers and six bronzes.

"It was amazing, I can't really describe it," said co-Forensics Coach Duane Smith of the team's second-place finish. "It was huge and the students did something great. This is our highest placing ever. Last year, we had third [place] and the year before we didn't place. I feel fantastic about the students and look forward to more."

Valley has experienced a significant growth in awards in the last two years according to Smith, who said three of the last eight national gold medals for persuasive speaking have

awarded to Valley students.

"That's out of thousands of students from across the country," said Smith.

The team flew to Texas and stayed together for the six-day trip, with Smith and fellow coach Josh Miller emphasizing the need for teamwork, humility and discipline as keys to achievement.

"As something to enforce discipline, we make the whole team go to the gym at 6:30 a.m. every morning that we're there," said Smith. "After we wake up as a team, by 8 a.m. we're working on speeches. Most schools have partied all night and are sleeping in. We're there working hard."

A handout was also given to each member with a list of tips and guidelines for the events. "Be humble or you will stumble!" and "Represent your team with excellence!" are two of the 10 in the list. Team members say the program has taught them important values.

"It's definitely a lot of work, but it interesting to build a camaraderie with the other students," said team member Jessica Wolford. "That paired with the sharpening that happens

when you're forced to get up in front of people and be judged attracted me to the team."

"[The win] felt marvelous," said Wolford, who won a gold and bronze medal. "Our hard work paid off. I was shocked to win a gold, but it felt very nice to show I have great coaches and that Valley is a great school."

The winners were; Wolford, Marcus Hill, Briana Evigan, Lucy Boyadshyan, Zach Moss, Abby Butt and Corina Adaskavig.

While the team has seen the awards mount, Miller said the impact reaches deeper.

"It's great if you take trophies, but ultimately I tell all the students it's more about the experiences and memories that you have," said Miller. "This is something they will take with them for the rest of their lives."

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SPORTS

7

Stars of the Month

March

Men: David Harden - Track and Field

Women: Tiffanie Wright - Swimming and Diving

Stars of the Week

Men: Terrance Spann - Track and Field

Men: Leonardo Dottavio - Baseball

Women: Tiffany Wright - Swimming/Diving

Women: Shasha Snyder - Softball

LAVC SCORES

Thursday 4/19/07

Baseball vs. Pierce (W 11-6)
Baseball Record: 22-15, 11-6

Softball vs. College of the Canyons (W 10-9 and W 7-6)
Softball Record: 24-16, 17-7, 12-5

Saturday 4/21/07

Baseball vs. Glendale (W 20-0)
Baseball Record: 23-15, 12-6

LAVC SCHEDULE

Wednesday 4/25/06

No Scheduled Games

Thursday 4/26/06

Baseball vs. Bakersfield
2:30 p.m.

Swimming @ WSC Championship @ Santa Monica TBA

Friday 4/27/06

Swimming @ WSC Championship @ Santa Monica TBA

Saturday 4/28/06

Baseball @ Bakersfield 1 p.m.

Track @ WSC Finals @ Bakersfield TBA

Sunday 4/29/06

No Scheduled Games

Monday 4/30/06

No Scheduled Games

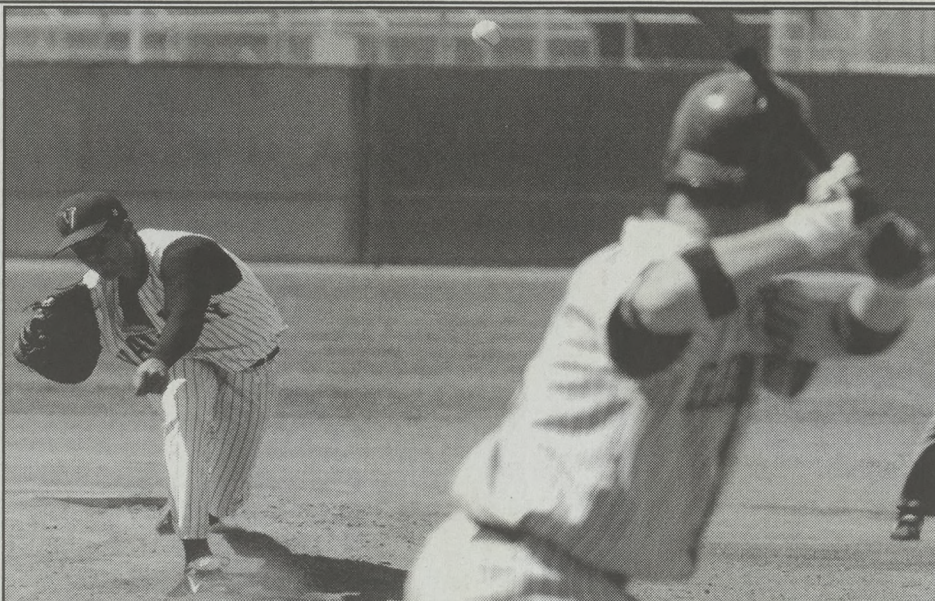
Tuesday 5/1/06

Baseball vs. L.A. Mission
2:30 p.m.



BASEBALL

Valley Batters Vaqueros Saturday



GOLDEN ARM - Valley College pitcher Martin Sarabia delivers a pitch during the Monarchs' 20-0 victory at Pike Field over Glendale College, Saturday April 21.

By DIANA QUEZADA
STAFF WRITER

Approaching the end of the season, the Valley College Monarchs baseball team defeated the Glendale Vaqueros 20-0 Saturday in an impressive offensive and defensive display. Valley's pitchers held the Vaqueros to only five hits while getting 19 hits of their own.

The Monarchs set the tone early, retiring the side within the first three minutes of the game, not letting any Vaqueros reach first base. Team members were very

confident and positive just before the start of the game.

"We're going to win," said freshmen center-fielder Angel Nunez and second baseman Justin Kaid.

"We're approaching the end of the season and every game is equally important," said right fielder Leandro Dottavio. "We need to win as many as we can ... I'm just going to try and take it one inning at a time."

The Vaqueros didn't stand a chance with errant throws and error-

prone play. In the sixth inning while attempting to pick off a runner, Glendale's second baseman missed the catch, sending two Monarchs home.

"We want to play every game like it's a playoff game," said Head Coach Dave Mallas. "Coming out and beating someone 20 to nothing shows what kind of day we had. But it started by a great pitching performance by Martin Sarabia."

Starting pitcher Sarabia pitched six innings and had seven strike-

outs. Vince Eberhard and Thomas Johnson pitched one inning each to set up John Henry Jacobs, who came in for the ninth and completed the shut out.

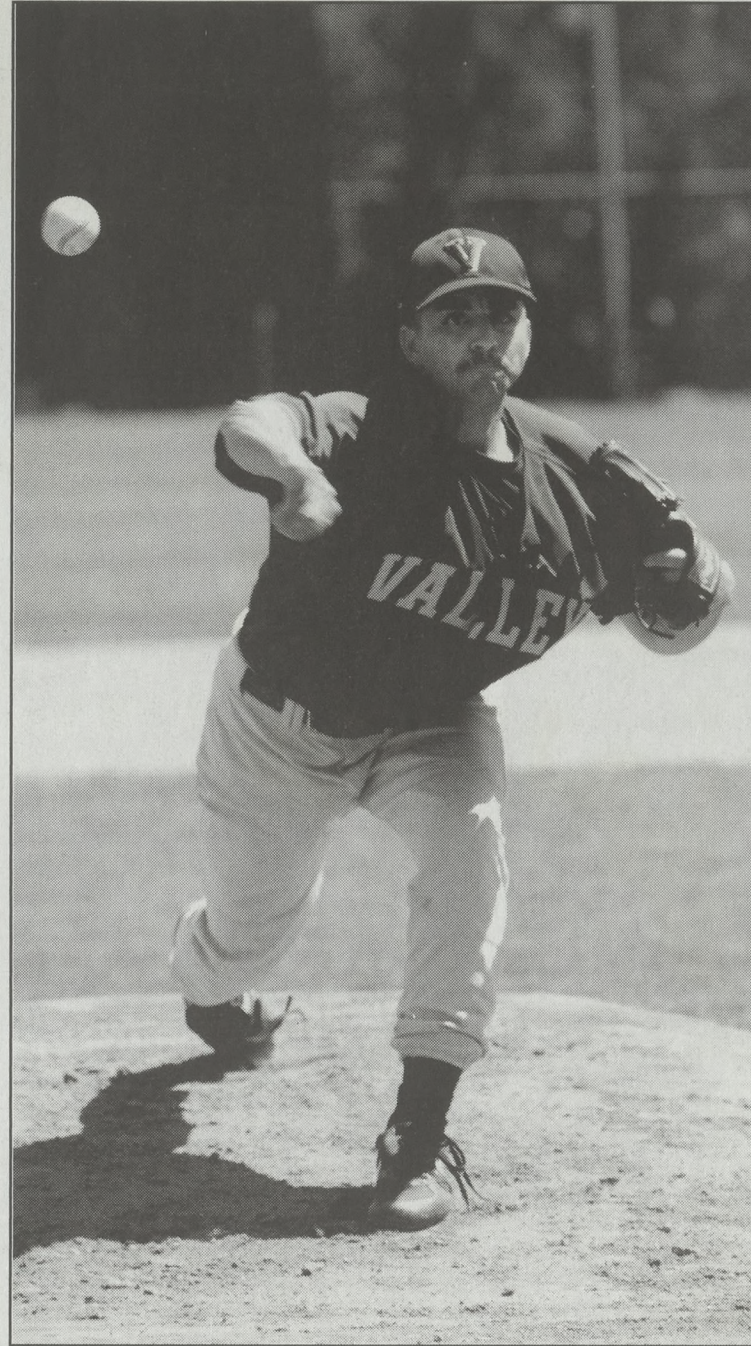
With the bases loaded in the eighth inning, left-fielder Nathaniel Dean cracked a grand slam home run over the left field fence. Dottavio followed with a back-to-back home run.

In between the teams switching sides, the Monarchs played songs such as "One Step Closer" by Linkin Park and "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana that kept the adrenaline rush flowing.

Coach Mallas was pleased with the teams effort and their execution of game plan.

"We won one and lost one last time we played," said Mallas. "So my advice was just to come out and play their game. For the pitchers to throw strikes, for our offense to take quality at bats, and if we do what we do then were going to come out with a win."

The Monarchs



POWERFUL MONARCH - Valley College starting pitcher Ivan Gonzalez delivers a pitch against Glendale College Tuesday, April 24. Gonzalez, who pitched nine innings, was trying to win his 7th game of the season. The Monarchs lost 6 to 5 in 10 innings at Stengel Field.

Athletics Forms New Web Recruitment

By GRANT BOMANN
STAFF WRITER

New technology has been introduced on the Valley College athletics web page that allows prospective student-athletes to contact Valley coaches. This new link allows student athletes to fill out all the information a coach would need in order to evaluate the player.

"It allows the students to make first contact [with Valley]," said Dale Beck, sports information director. "Because the coaches are not allowed to make first contact out of the district." The rule set on community colleges in California is; each college has a district that they are entitled to scout within. If they want to make contact with a recruit that lives outside of the district boundaries then the student must make first contact to allow the coaches to talk to him/her.

The form was put on the Valley athletics web page about nine months ago but with the new technology came some problems along the way. According to Dale Beck, the web site was inconsistent with readability and delivery. It has since been redesigned and is now completely functional and up and running for all prospective athletes.

Having only been up for nine months, some in which were troublesome, it is hard to tell whether this form has produced any additional recruits to attend

Valley.

"Since coaches are unable to recruit outside the district boundaries set up by the National Junior College Athletics Association, it makes it tough to bring in student athletes from outside the district," said head baseball coach Dave Mallas. Valley got the idea for the recruiting link from the UCLA and USC athletic pages.

UCLA and USC have blocks throughout the year that prohibit them from contacting recruits. The online form gives athletes an opportunity to let a college know that they are interested and give them background info on themselves.

After filling out the recruiting form, the information gets sent straight to Beck, where he can evaluate the information, print out the form, and forward it on the correct coaching staff.

The new athletic application form allows the coaches to evaluate each prospective athlete and prioritize him or her for recruiting purposes. According to Beck, since the installation of the form, the most submissions have come through for the football program.

"As we progress with things like this form, I'm hoping the concept will be used by other departments to enhance their programs," said Beck.

The recruiting form hopes to simplify the recruiting process while providing all the necessary information to contact the intended athletes.

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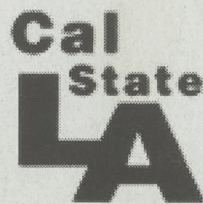
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Mime Magic

Photos and Text by Ima Kuroda

Jacques Bernard started miming in Japan in 1989. Since then he's been traveling worldwide to express his feelings of love and compassion through his body. He was given the white mask he is holding in the photos by an elderly woman in Japan.

Jacques says he might do this for the rest of his life. He can be found miming at the Santa Monica Pier and around the globe.

